

What is claimed is:

1 1. A software tool creation method, comprising:  
2       prompting input of process steps and a plurality  
3       of potential selections associated with each of the  
4       process steps;  
5       storing input process steps and associated  
6 potential selections; and  
7       using the stored process steps and associated  
8       potential selections to create a software tool for  
9       outputting the input process steps based upon input  
10      selections.

1       ✓2. The method of claim 1, wherein the prompting is  
2 performed by a displayed template.

1           3.    The method of claim 1, wherein the prompting is  
2 audible.

1        4. The method of claim 1, wherein input of a  
2 designation is further prompted and stored, associating a  
3 potential selection with a subsequent process step.

1        5. The method of claim 1, wherein one of the  
2 potential selections permits input of a character string.

1 ~~sup~~ 6. The method of claim 1, wherein the created  
2 software tool is displayed.

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4 7. The method of claim 6, wherein the created  
5 software tool is displayed as sequential process steps with  
6 potential selections.

1 8. The method of claim 7, wherein each of the  
2 plurality of sequential steps in a process is displayed  
3 concurrent with a single step and associated potential  
4 selections.

1 9. The method of claim 1, wherein input of a query  
2 is prompted as a process step.

1 10. The method of claim 9, wherein potential answers  
2 to the query are prompted as associated potential  
3 selections.

1 ~~sup~~ 11. The method of claim 1, further comprising storing  
2 the created software tool.

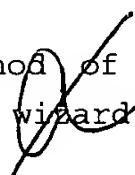
1 12. The method of claim 11, wherein at least one of  
2 a stored process step and potential selection in the  
3 created software tool is modifiable.

1 13. The method of claim 1, further comprising  
2 prompting and storing input of a designation, associated  
3 with a process step, indicating one of machine and non-  
4 machine processing.

1 14. The method of claim 13, wherein upon receiving an  
2 input designation indicating machine processing, further  
3 input of information relating to the machine processing is

4 prompted.

1  15. The method of claim 1, wherein the created  
2 software tool sequentially conveys each of the input  
3 process steps and prompts selection of a potential  
4 selection for each process step.

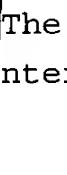
1  16. The method of claim 1, wherein the created  
2 software tool is a wizard.

1  17. The method of claim 15, wherein the created  
2 software tool sequentially displays each of the input  
3 process steps.

1  18. The method of claim 15, wherein the created  
2 software tool audibly sequentially outputs each of the  
3 input process steps.

1  19. The method of claim 15, wherein conveyance of a  
2 process step is dependent upon a selection made in response  
3 to a previously conveyed process step.

1  20. A software tool creator, comprising:  
3 a user interface, adapted to prompt input of  
4 process steps and potential selections associated with  
5 each of the process steps;  
6 a memory adapted to store input process steps and  
7 associated potential selections; and  
8 a processor, adapted to create a software tool  
9 based upon the stored process steps and associated  
potential selections.

1  21. The software tool creator of claim 20, wherein  
2 the user interface is displayed.

1        22. The software tool creator of claim 21, wherein  
2 the user interface is an integrated input and display.

1        23. The software tool creator of claim 21, wherein  
2 the user interface is a touch-screen.

1        ✓ 24. The software tool creator of claim 20, wherein  
2 the user interface prompts audibly. *3*

1        ✓ 25. The software tool creator of claim 21, wherein  
2 the memory is adapted to store audibly input process steps  
3 and associated potential selections. *4*

1        ✓ 26. The software tool creator of claim 20, wherein  
2 the user interface is further adapted to prompt input of a  
3 designation, associating a potential selection with a  
4 subsequent process step. *5*

1        ✓ 27. The software tool creator of claim 20, wherein  
2 one of the potential selections permits input of a  
3 character string. *5*

1        ✓ 28. The software tool creator of claim 20, wherein  
2 the user interface prompts input of a query as a process  
3 step. *9*

1        ✓ 29. The software tool creator of claim 28, wherein  
2 the user interface prompts input of potential answers to a  
3 query as associated potential selections. *16*

1        ✓ 30. The software tool creator of claim 20, wherein  
2 the memory is further adapted to store the created software  
3 tool. *11*

1       31. The software tool creator of claim 20, wherein at  
2 least one of a stored process step and potential selection  
3 in the created software tool is modifiable through the user  
4 interface.

1       32. The software tool creator of claim 20, wherein  
2 the user interface further prompts input of a designation,  
3 associated with a process step, indicating one of machine  
4 and non-machine processing.

1       33. The software tool creator of claim 32, wherein  
2 the user interface further prompts input of information  
3 relating to the machine processing upon receiving an input  
4 of a designation indicating machine processing.      14

1       34. The software tool creator of claim 33, wherein  
2 the user interface further prompts input of a machine 14  
3 connection.

1       35. The software tool creator of claim 34, wherein off  
2 the input of the machine connection includes input of a  
3 URL.

1       36. An article of manufacture, comprising:  
2            a computer usable medium including,  
3              first code for causing a computer to prompt  
4              input of process steps and a plurality of  
5              potential selections associated with each of the  
6              process steps;  
7              second code for causing a computer to store  
8              input process steps and associated potential  
9              selections; and  
10             third code for causing a computer to create

11 a software tool based upon the stored process  
12 steps and associated potential selections. 2

1 37. The article of manufacture of claim 36, wherein  
2 the first code causes the computer to prompt via a 2  
3 displayed template.

1 38. The article of manufacture of claim 36, wherein  
2 the first code causes the computer to audibly prompt. 3

1 39. The article of manufacture of claim 36, wherein  
2 the first code and second code respectively cause the 4  
3 computer to further prompt and store an input designation,  
4 associating a potential selection with a subsequent process  
5 step.

1 40. The article of manufacture of claim 36, wherein  
2 the first code causes the computer to prompt input of 5  
3 queries as the process steps.

1 41. The article of manufacture of claim 40, wherein 6  
2 the first code causes the computer to prompt input of  
3 potential answers to the queries as the associated  
4 potential selections.

1 42. The article of manufacture of claim 36, wherein  
2 the first code and second code respectively cause the 7  
3 computer to prompt and store an input designation,  
4 associated with a process step, indicating one of machine  
5 and non-machine processing.

1 43. The article of manufacture of claim 42, wherein  
2 the first and second code respectively cause the computer  
3 to prompt and store input of information relating to the 8

4 machine processing upon receiving an input of a designation  
5 indicating machine processing.

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1 ~~Sub~~ 44. A propagated signal, comprising:  
2 first code segment instructing prompting input of  
3 process steps and a plurality of potential selections  
4 associated with each of the process steps;  
5 second code segment instructing storage of input  
6 process steps and associated potential selections; and  
7 third code segment instructing creation of a  
8 software tool based upon stored process steps and  
9 associated potential selections.

1 45. The propagated signal of claim 44, wherein the  
2 propagated signal is embodied in a digital signal.

1 46. The propagated signal of claim 44, wherein the  
2 propagated signal is embodied in a digital bit stream.

1 47. The propagated signal of claim 44, wherein the  
2 propagated signal is embodied in a carrier wave.

1 48. The propagated signal of claim 44, wherein the  
2 first code segment instructs prompting via a displayed  
3 template.

1 49. The propagated signal of claim 44, wherein the  
2 first code segment instructs audible prompting. ?

1 50. The propagated signal of claim 44, wherein the  
2 first and second code segment respectively instruct  
3 prompting of input and storage of an input designation,  
4 associating a potential selection with a subsequent process  
5 step.

1 ✓ 51. The propagated signal of claim 44, wherein the  
2 first code segment instructs prompting of input of queries  
3 as process steps. *9*

1 ✓ 52. The propagated signal of claim 51, wherein the  
2 first code segment instructs prompting of input of  
3 potential answers to the queries as the associated  
4 potential selections. *10*

1 ✓ 53. The propagated signal of claim 44, wherein the  
2 first code segment and second code segment respectfully  
3 instruct prompting of input and storage of an input  
4 designation, associated with a process step, and indicating  
5 one of machine and non-machine processing. *13*

1 ✓ 54. The propagated signal of claim 53, wherein the  
2 first and second code segments respectively instruct  
3 prompting of input and storage of input of information  
4 relating to the machine processing in response to receiving  
5 input of a designation indicating machine processing.

1 ✓ 55. The article of manufacture of claim 36, wherein  
2 the third code causes the computer to create a wizard.

1 ✓ 56. The propagated signal of claim 44, wherein the  
2 third code segment instructs creation of a wizard.

1 ✓ 57. The method of claim 1, further comprising:  
2 accessing prestored information and creating the  
3 software tool, at least in part, based upon the  
4 prestored information.

1 58. The method of claim 57, wherein the prestored

2 information is stored in a relational database.

1 59. The method of claim 13, further comprising:  
2 accessing prestored information upon receiving an  
3 input designation indicating machine processing.

1 60. The method of claim 59, wherein the prestored  
2 information is stored in a relational database.

1 61. The method of claim 1, further comprising:  
2 storing additional information associated with at  
3 least one of a process step and potential selection. 7

1 62. The method of claim 58, wherein the additional 35  
2 information includes a URL.

1 63. The method of claim 57, wherein the prestored  
2 information includes information stored in a text file  
3 including a state table.

1 64. The method of claim 60, wherein the prestored  
2 information includes information stored in a text file  
3 including a state transition table.

1 65. The method of claim 1, further comprising:  
2 selecting from a plurality of languages in which  
3 prompting will occur.

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